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The Causes of the Backwardness in English Education of the Muslims of Colonial Bengal: A Critical Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The spread of Western and English education in the Bengal Presidency under British colonial rule led to the rapid educational advancement of the Bengali Hindu community, while the Muslims of Bengal remained comparatively backward. This paper examines the historical causes behind the relative educational backwardness of Bengali Muslims in English education during the nineteenth century. It argues that this backwardness cannot be explained solely by religious conservatism or political hostility toward colonial rule; rather, it was the outcome of a complex interaction of institutional, economic, and policy-related factors. The limitations of the traditional maktab–madrasah system, the delayed introduction of English education in institutions such as Calcutta Madrasah and Hooghly Mohsin College, and the inadequate adaptation of colonial educational policies to Muslim social realities significantly contributed to this situation. Economic decline among Muslim zamindars following the Permanent Settlement, the late emergence of a Muslim middle class, and the ineffective utilization of waqf resources further hindered progress. Nevertheless, the efforts of reformers such as Nawab Abdul Latif and Syed Ameer Ali gradually encouraged the acceptance of English education. The study concludes that Muslim educational backwardness in colonial Bengal was shaped by structural constraints rather than purely cultural resistance, and that gradual reforms after the 1870s helped initiate measurable educational progress.

The spread of Western education and English education in Bengal presidency began under the influence of the British colonial rule. From the latter half of the eighteenth century to the first decade of the nineteenth century, the spread of English education largely took place through private initiatives. Christian missionaries and a few English officials took the lead in establishing modern schools, English-medium institutions, and colleges in Calcutta, Hooghly, and their surrounding regions. In this regard it is mentionable that in these early private initiatives for the dissemination of Western knowledge, science, and English education in colonial Bengal, the interest and participation of the contemporary Bengali Hindu elite and upper classes were both active and commendable. *As a result of their active role, Western and English education rapidly spread among the upper and middle classes of Hindu society in colonial Bengal.* With the establishment of Hindu College in Calcutta in 1817 CE and its transformation into Presidency College in 1855 CE, a new class of modern Western and English-educated elites emerged within Bengali Hindu society. While modern Western and English education was rapidly expanding within the Hindu society of Bengal through the establishment of modern Bengali-medium and English-medium educational institutions, the Muslim community of Bengal largely remained confined within its traditional Madrasah educational system. The influence of modern Western and English education began to be felt among the Muslims of Bengal only from the closing years of the third decade of the nineteenth century through the Calcutta Hesting Madrasah College and Hooghly Mohsin College, and its progress was both slow and marked by various complexities and limitations. From the very beginning of the rule of the East India Company, a certain degree of political hostility among the Muslim elite of Bengal towards the Company's administration, along with their suspicion of the activities of Christian missionaries, and the influence of the conservative attitudes of the Wahabis, the Faraizis, and a section of the *mullahs* and *maulavis*, prevented the Muslims of Bengal from abandoning their traditional *Maktab–Madrasah* educational system and from actively pursuing modern schooling and English education. At the mean time, the economic decline of the Muslim zamindars and the elite were resulting from the Company's Permanent Settlement and the resumption of *lakheraj* (rent-free lands) , the delayed emergence of a Muslim middle class based on agriculture, and, above all, the expenditure of *waqf* and governmental funds in the field of education without adequately addressing the needs of the conservative Muslim society, together with the partly misguided educational policies of the colonial government, further contributed to the educational backwardness of the Muslim community of Bengal in modern Western education, as many scholars have observed.

From the early fourth decade of the nineteenth century (1844) to the seventh decade (1867), several significant developments contributed to a gradual transformation in the attitude of the Muslim

community of Bengal toward English education. On the one hand, the announcement of new administrative and educational policies by the colonial government, and on the other hand, the rapid expansion of English education within the neighbouring Bengali Hindu society, made the Ashraf elite Muslims and emerging middle-class Atraf Muslims of Bengal increasingly aware of the necessity and importance of acquiring English education. As a result, during this period they gradually overcame their earlier hesitation and began to make earnest efforts to acquire English education alongside the traditional study of Arabic and Persian. In this context, through the enthusiasm of individuals associated with the Calcutta Hastings Madrasah College and the Hooghly Mohsin College, as well as through the initiatives of the colonial government, the first institutional efforts to impart Western and English education among Muslim students in Colonial Bengal were undertaken. Some of the contemporary prominent liberal and pro-government Muslim leaders such as Dilwar Hossain, Nawab Abdul Latif, Syed Ameer Ali, and Amir Ali Khan Bahadur strongly advocated the adoption of English education among the Muslim community

However, although the interest among Muslim students of Bengal in acquiring Western and English education gradually increased from the early fourth decade of the nineteenth century to the end of the seventh decade, the velocity of this progress remained extremely slow. Between 1846 CE and 1852 CE, only four Muslim students succeeded in obtaining the Junior Scholarship in English. In December 1862 CE, the number of Hindus and Muslims who passed the Entrance Examination were 354 and 15 respectivly; and there were 33 Hindus and 03 Muslims graduates. During the period 1862 CE- 1867 CE there were 2237 Hindus who passed the Entrance Examination to 66 Muslims; 524 Hindus who passed the First Arts esamination to 14 Muslim; 159 Hundu graduates compared to 06 Muslim graduates and while 57 Hindus competed successfully in the Master of Arts Examination not a single candidate qualified for the same.[1] Overall, this slow progress and relative backwardness can be attributed to several factors. Among these, the inherent limitations of the traditional madrasah centric education system, and on the one hand, the flawed educational policies of the colonial government on the other, were particularly responsible for this situation.

During the Nawabi period and in the early phase of Company rule, the institutional forms of education prevalent in Muslim society in Bengal were the *Maktab* and the *Madrasa*. The *Maktab* functioned as the primary centre of education, while the *Madrasa* served as the institution for higher learning. The curriculum of this educational system mainly consisted of the study of religious literature, theology, philosophy, and law in the Arabic and Persian languages. In essence, this traditional system of education was structured upon the principles of Islamic scholasticism. Since *Maktab* education was generally

conducted in close association with mosques, Bengali Muslims remained to a considerable extent detached from the opportunity of receiving instruction in the Bengali language. In contrast, in the neighbouring Hindu society, the primary institutions of learning known as *Pathshalas* imparted education in the mother tongue, Bengali, alongside Sanskrit. With the changing socio-political circumstances, elements of Western education also began to be introduced in these *Pathshalas*. However, for a variety of reasons, the Muslims of Bengal showed little inclination to pursue education in these institutions.

The first Governor-General of the East India Company, Warren Hastings, established the Calcutta Madrasah in 1781 with the objective of meeting the Company's administrative need for efficient Persian-educated officials and of securing the loyalty of the conservative Muslim aristocracy of Calcutta. For the establishment of this centre of higher learning, Hastings personally contributed a sum of sixty thousand rupees (57,545/-) from his own funds. In order to meet the expenses of the Calcutta Madrasah College, government of East India Company assigned the revenue of several villages in the Twenty-Four Parganas district on 3 June 1782. Subsequently, on the recommendation of Warren Hastings, the government arranged an annual grant of 29,000 rupees in 1785 for the maintenance of the institution. The Company's government assumed the responsibility of patronizing the Calcutta Madrasah with the objective of promoting Persian as the language of the courts and administration, and of producing a class of qualified Muslim law officers such as *darogas*, *qazis*, *munshis*, *vakils*, and competent clerical personnel for the revenue department, who were well-versed in Persian and Islamic law. However, H. H. Wilson, Secretary of the General Committee of Public Instruction established in 1823, did not allocate any funds for the advancement of Arabic and Persian education in the Madrasah College. Furthermore, although the government introduced English education in the Calcutta Sanskrit College after 1825, the introduction of English education in the Madrasah College was considerably delayed.[(2)]

It is noteworthy that throughout the nineteenth century the Calcutta Hesting Madrasah College remained the principal centre of higher and modern education for the Muslims of southern and eastern Bengal. It was around this institution that the earliest initiatives among the Muslims of Bengal to acquire modern Western and English education became evident. From the very beginning, instruction at the Hesting Madrasah College was primarily imparted in subjects such as Arabic and Persian languages, Islamic theology, philosophy, and law. By around 1824 CE, the Western medical education was introduced at the Hesting Calcutta Madrasah College. A noticeable interest in the study of modern medical science developed among the students of the Madrasah College. However, Western medical texts were primarily taught through their Arabic and Persian translations. In this regard it is mentionable that The General

Committee of Public Instruction was established in 1823 CE which allocated a portion of the government funds earmarked for education not only to the Sanskrit College but also to the translation of several books on Western medical science into Arabic and Persian for the purpose of medical instruction at the Calcutta Madrasah College. Furthermore, through the initiative of the distinguished Western physician John Breton, arrangements were made from 1826 CE for the students of the medical department of the Calcutta Madrasah College to study the textbooks of the Native Medical Institution. However, a report submitted in 1833 CE by the eminent Western physician John Tytler revealed that despite the gradual development of medical education at the Madrasah College, the institution suffered from several difficulties, particularly the shortage of an adequate number of teachers and textbooks, as well as various infrastructural deficiencies. A report submitted in 1833 CE by the distinguished Western physician John Tytler revealed that, despite the gradual development of medical education at the Calcutta Madrasah College, the institution faced several difficulties. Among the most significant problems were the shortages of an adequate number of qualified teachers and textbooks, as well as various infrastructural deficiencies. From 1833CE onward, a debate emerged among colonial officials regarding whether Western medical science should be taught in Oriental languages or in English. Tytler advocated the use of indigenous languages, whereas Alexander Duff strongly supported the use of the English language as the medium of instruction. Ultimately, Lord William Bentinck resolved the matter by issuing Government Order No. 28 on 28 January 1835 CE, which abolished the department of medical instruction conducted in Fersi (persian) languages at the Calcutta Madrasah College. Subsequently, with the establishment of the Calcutta Medical College in 1835 (which began functioning in 1836 CE), the teaching of medical science through the medium of English was made compulsory.[(3)] Under these circumstances, the students of the Calcutta Madrasah College, lacking adequate proficiency in the English language, found themselves unable to take advantage of the opportunity to study Western medical science at the Calcutta Medical College. As a result, Muslim students of Bengal were effectively deprived of access to modern medical education.

In 1819 CE for the first time, British government appointed an English Secretary at the Calcutta Hasting Madrasa College. Subsequently, in 1824 CE, a Medical department for the teaching of medical science was opened at this institution. In response to the changing circumstances, an initiative was undertaken around 1826 CE to introduce a department for English education at the Hesting Madrasah College. However, in reality, it was only in 1829 CE that an English Arabic department was formally established at the Calcutta Madrasah College. By around 1830 CE, only eighty-seven students were able to receive elementary instruction in English from this institution. [(4)]However, from the beginning the English-Arabic

department of the Madrasah College suffered from a shortage of an adequate number of English teachers and the necessary textbooks. From 1833 CE onward, the study of English was made compulsory alongside Arabic at the Madrasah College; nevertheless, for various reasons the students of the institution failed to take full advantage of this opportunity. During this period, more systematic and departmental efforts were undertaken; however, these initiatives produced only limited success. Over the subsequent quarter century, the *Calcutta Muhammadan College (Hastings Madrasah College)* experienced a trajectory similar to that of the Muslim community of Bengal, characterized by comparable challenges and limited progress. In this regard W.W.Hunter state that "It was allowed to drop our of sight and when the Local Government made any sign on the subject, it was some expression of impatience at its continuing to exist at all." (5) On the one hand, the lack of a well conceived governmental plan and adequate patronage, and on the other hand, the lack of financial capability became a major obstacles in their path to receiving English education.(6) Although the government adopted the policy of promoting English education in 1835 and directed that the funds allocated for education be primarily spent on English instruction, it did not take effective measures for a long time to improve or develop the English department of the Calcutta Hesting Madrasah College.The establishment of Mohsin College in 1836 CE opened up new opportunity for the development of modern Western and English education among the Muslims of colonial . However, this opportunity did not materialize to a significant extent, largely due to the mismanagement of the Mohsin Endowment Fund and the erroneous educational policies pursued by the colonial government.

Unlike the Bengali Hindu elites and zamindars of the nineteenth century, Muslim zamindars and aristocracy were generally not set up to be equally proactive in investing their financial resources in the establishment and maintenance of modern educational institutions. Consequently, apart from limited governmental assistance, the accumulated resources of the Mohsin Endowment Fund remained virtually the only significant financial support available for the spread of modern education among the Muslims during this period. After the government assumed responsibility for the supervision of Mohsin's waqf estate, it decided to consistent with the objectives laid down in his will to utilize the funds of the Mohsin Endowment for the promotion of modern education among the Muslim community. The General Committee of Public Instruction proposed the establishment of a college at Hooghly with financial support from the Mohsin Fund. Accepting this proposal, the government sanctioned a sum of Rupees 1,40,000 from the Mohsin Endowment fund for the establishment of a college in Hooghly in the name of Haji Muhammad Mohsin and further allocated an annual grant of Rupees 54,000 for its maintenance and administration. In line with the establishment of the Hooghly Mohsin College, by around 1838 CE an

English-medium school and a vernacular (general) school were also founded in connection with this institution. Education in both the college and the affiliated schools was made free of tuition fees, and a policy of open admission was adopted, allowing students from all religious communities to enroll. Following the recommendations of the General Committee of Public Instruction, the government introduced two distinct departments in Mohsin College, namely the English Department and the Arabic-Persian Department. In the Arabic–Persian Department, no provision was made for the teaching of English, although this department had a predominance of Muslim students. On the other hand, the English Department did not include traditional Islamic subjects in its curriculum, which contributed to reluctance among Muslim students to seek admission to this department. As a result, only a very small number of Muslim students enrolled in the English section.(7)

It is noteworthy that as early as 1817 CE the Company's government had established the Hooghly Mohsin Madrasa (Madrasah-i-Mohsinia) at Chinsurah with financial support from the Mohsin Endowment Fund. However, even there were not any arrangement in this institution for the teaching of English alongside Arabic and Persian. Furthermore, by introducing free English education in the newly established Mohsin College, the authorities effectively allowed the resources of the Mohsin Endowment Fund to be utilized in a manner that, until 1873, resulted in little direct educational benefit for the student of Muslim community. The results of the first annual examination reveal this disparity clearly: out of 1,013 students in the English Department, only 31 were Muslims, while the remaining students consisted of 948 Hindus and 34 Christians. (8)Thus, the attempt to promote English education among Muslim students through Mohsin College did not achieve the intended success.

The efforts to promote English education among Muslim students through Mohsin College did not achieve the expected success. According to the report of the General Committee of Public Instruction, around 1850–1851 CE, out of 397 students enrolled in the English Department of Mohsin College, only 6 were Muslims, while the remaining students consisted of 389 Hindus and 2 Christians.(9) It is also noteworthy that European Law was introduced into the curriculum of Hindu College as early as 1843 CE, whereas it was not incorporated into the curriculum of Mohsin College before 1865 CE. As a consequence, Muslim students of colonial Bengal also lagged behind in the field of Western legal education.(10) The attempt to promote English education among Muslim students through the Anglo-Arabic Department of the Calcutta Madrasa College suffered from several defects.The institution had only one teacher for English language, which significantly limited the effectiveness of instruction. Up to

1851, only two students from the Madrasah College succeeded in passing the Junior Scholarship Examination; they were Abdul Latif and Wahidun Nabi.[11]

In 1853 CE, the government appointed an Inquiry Committee under the chairmanship of F. Halliday to examine measures for the improvement of education at the Calcutta Madrasah College. Based on the recommendations of this committee, the government in 1854 CE replaced an Anglo-Persian Department in lieu of the earlier Anglo-Arabic Department. Under this new arrangement, the students of the Madrasah College were given the opportunity to receive English education at a comparatively low fee, approximately one-fourth of the tuition charged at Hindu College. However, the progress remained limited; by 1856 CE only seven students from this department succeeded in passing the Junior Scholarship Examination. By 1856–1857 CE, a total of 158 students were received English education in this department.[12]

Although some improvement was noticeable compared to the earlier situation, the shortcomings of the government's policy soon became evident. In 1854, the Madrasa was reorganized into two separate divisions. The lower division, designated as the English–Persian Department, provided instruction up to an intermediate level in Persian and English along with the vernacular languages, namely Bengali or Urdu. The higher division consisted of the Arabic–Persian Department, where no provision was made for the teaching of English. According to the policy adopted at the time, students who passed from the lower division and wished to pursue higher studies in Arabic and Persian were admitted to the higher division of the Madrasa, while those who intended to pursue higher education in English were required to seek admission to the Metropolitan College.[13]As a consequence, the students of the higher division of the Madrasa remained disadvantaged in acquiring English education. On the other hand, the policy of admitting students who graduated from the lower division to the Metropolitan College for higher studies in English also failed to achieve much success, largely due to the financial constraints faced by most of these students. In this context, William Wilson Hunter said *"We should remember that, after we had misappropriated Mohsin's waqf estate a generation earlier, the Calcutta Madrasa remained the only institution where Muslims could hope to obtain higher education."* [14] Hunter advocated the reform of Madrasa education and emphasized the need for a well-planned and continuous curriculum. He proposed that the higher division of the Madrasa, namely the Arabic Department, should be reorganized into an Anglo-Arabic Department, which would function as a natural and integrated extension of the lower division, the English–Persian Department. Such a restructuring, he argued, would enable a Muslim student to progress smoothly through a coherent educational ladder-from the government district schools

to the two divisions of the Madrasa College-and thereby gain access to the highest branches of education through a process of gradual academic transition.[15]

Abdul Latif, a prominent Muslim intelectual of nineteenth century's Bengal and the key figure of Mohammedan Literary society actively campaigned in favour of the spread of English education among the Muslims of colonial Bengal. He strongly advocated for the growth of English education among Muslim youth through the existing madrasah education system. In order to ensure that Muslim students could compete with Hindu students in higher education, he appealed to the government to introduce an additional college-level English class in the Anglo-Persian Department of the Calcutta Madrasah College Furthermore, in 1861CE he submitted a petition to the government for the introduction of an English department at the Hooghly Mohsin Madrasa and also requested the provision of scholarships for Muslim students. He also demanded that the funds of the Mohsin Endowment should be properly utilized exclusively for the educational advancement of Muslim students.[16]

Ultimately, in 1873 CE the government sanctioned an annual grant of Rs.50,000 for the administration of Hooghly Mohsin College. At the same time, the earlier expenditure of Rs. 54,000 from the Mohsin Endowment Fund for this purpose was discontinued, and the government decided that this amount should instead be spent specifically on the education of Muslim students. With this fund, the government established three new Madrasah Colleges in Dhaka, Rajshahi and Chattagram in Eastern Bengal,where arrangements were made for elementary English education alongside Arabic and Persian studies.In this stage an Anglo-Persian Department was also introduced at the Hooghly Mohsinia Madrasah for the first time.. In addition, it was decided that scholarships would be awarded to madrasah students from the Mohsin Endowment Fund. Financial assistance was also sanctioned for poor but meritorious Muslim students pursuing higher education, whereby two-thirds of their tuition fees would be paid from the fund if they studied at Presidency College or other colleges. In 1873 CE, when the doors of the newly constructed building of Presidency College were opened to Muslim students, Nawab Abdul Latif and his associates expressed their satisfaction. They felt that by availing themselves of the opportunity to study at this institution, Muslim students would be able to overcome their educational backwardness.[17] However, during the following three decades, only a small number of Muslim students received formal (fee-paying) education at Presidency College. Nevertheless, within a decade of the government's new educational policy, the rate of education among the Muslims of Bengal showed noticeable improvement. In 1871 CE, only 14.7 percent of the Bengali Muslim population was attending schools and colleges. But by 1881 CE-1882 CE, this figure had increased to 23.8 percent of the total population.[18]

Some prominent Muslim intellectuals of British Bengal such as Syed Ameer Ali, Syed Ameer Hossian, Muhammad Yusuf and their organization namely National Muhammadan Association criticized the government's decision to spend the Mohsin Endowment Fund primarily on madrasah education. They argued that the fund should instead be utilized for the promotion of Western knowledge, science, and English education, and in 1882 CE the Association also submitted a petition to Lord Ripon requesting the establishment of a full-fledged graduate-level college in Calcutta.[19] However, the government did not introduce any significant changes in its earlier educational policy concerning the Muslims of Bengal.

It is noteworthy that the backwardness of the Muslim society of colonial Bengal in English education can also be attributed to two important historical factors. Firstly, the persistence of Persian as a qualification for securing government employment in the land revenue and judicial departments until 1867 CE perhaps discouraged the adoption of English education among Urdu Farsi speaking elite Muslims. It is mentionable that in the initial stage of the Company's rule in Bengal from the late 18th century to early 19th century, legal profession was the only respectable job opportunity for the elite Muslims. Employment-oriented orthodox Muslim students preferred to join in the Anglo-Arabic and the Anglo-Persian department rather than the English department of the Calcutta Madrasah College and Hooghly Mohsin College. A educational Report indicate that at the end of September, 1851 CE there were 163 students in the Anglo-Persian department of the Hooghly Mohsin College, out of which as many as 89 percent were Muslim and 11 percent were Hindu students. This incident shows us the importance of the Persian language after the government declaration of English language as the Official language instead of Persian in 1837. Until 1867, the *ashraf* class of the Muslim community and the socially and economically marginalized sections of Hindu society largely pursued their education in the Arabic and Persian departments of Hooghly Mohsin College, which resulted in their relative exclusion from English education and their subsequent educational backwardness in the sphere of Western learning. [20]

Secondly, the delayed development of a Muslim agrarian middle class in Bengal, largely due to the processes associated with the commercialization of agriculture, also contributed to their educational backwardness. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the enactment of the Bengal Tenancy Acts (1885 and subsequent amendments) and the gradual recognition of the occupancy rights of the peasantry, along with the commercialization of agriculture, contributed to the emergence of an agrarian middle class within the Muslim society of colonial Bengal. The rise of this Muslim middle class appears to have had a significant correlation with the spread of English education among the Muslim community. Particularly in Eastern Bengal, the expansion of commercial agriculture, especially the cultivation of cash crops such

as jute, led to the growth of a rural Muslim middle class. Owing to various practical and socio-economic needs, this class became increasingly interested in providing their children with modern Western and English education. Viewed from another perspective, it may be argued that the delayed emergence of a middle class within Bengali Muslim society was one of the major factors responsible for the comparatively slow spread of English education among the Muslims of Bengal.(21) In this regard Dr. Jayanti Maitra said that- "….. Perhaps the most vital explanation of Bengali Muslim retrogression in English education was to be found in the relative absence among them of these middle classes which alone among the Bengali Hindus availed themselves in English education."(22)

At the higher level Muslim of Bengal lagged in English education far behind their Hindu neighbours partly because of the economic depression of the upper-class Muslim, in consequence of the permanent Settlement of land revenue (1793) and the resumption proceedings that deprived many Muslim families of their livelihood. The long-standing defective policy of the government regarding general education also contributed to the backwardness of the Muslims of Bengal in modern primary education as well as in education through their mother tongue, Bengali. William Wilson Hunter recommended the formulation of an effective educational system suitable for all sections of the Muslim community. He also advised the government to relax the "five-mile rule" concerning the establishment of educational institutions.(23)

Conclusion: From the above discussion, it may be argued that the theory that the Muslims of Bengal lagged behind in English education solely because of religious conservatism or their alleged hostility towards British rule is not historically tenable in its entirety. Rather, their educational backwardness was the result of a complex historical situation. On the one hand, the underdeveloped infrastructure of the traditional madrasah education system and the financial constraints faced by the Muslim community, and on the other hand, the defective policies of the colonial government regarding mass education, together created conditions that contributed significantly to the Muslims of Bengal falling behind in English education as well as in modern Western education. W.W.Hunter said regarding the defective educational policy toward the Orthodox Muslim community of Bengal that The lower class Muslims have nerve been reached by our system of Public Instruction. Even wealthier families of Bengal such as Nakhudas of Calcutta will have nothing to do with institutions which do not teach Persian or Arabic and in which and in which the religious faith of their children might be sapped by non-Muslim teachers. The middle class does send its boys to government school; but in Bengal the middle-class of Muhammedan is so thin as to have but slight effect one way or the other. In his work, William Wilson Hunter advised the government to adopt a pragmatic educational policy, arguing that an effective system of education suitable for all

sections of the Muslim community could be developed with minimal state expenditure. He suggested that it would be sufficient to frame liberal and inclusive regulations for the education of the lower, middle, and upper classes. According to Hunter, the most pressing requirement in this regard was not financial resources, but rather a careful consideration of the specific needs and deficiencies of the Muslim community.He further advocated reforms to ensure better coordination between the En glish classes of the Anglo-Arabic and Anglo-Persian departments in both the higher and lower sections of Calcutta Madrasah and Hooghly Mohsin College. At the same time, Hunter reminded the government that the funds originally endowed by Warren Hastings for the Calcutta Madrasah, along with the substantial properties of the Mohsin Waqf in Hooghly, if properly utilized, would be sufficient to establish a comprehensive and effective system of higher English education for the Muslim community without requiring any additional financial burden on the government. However, the educational report of the Hunter Commission Report (1883) did not recommend the establishment of any separate institutions of higher education for Muslims either in Kolkata or Dhaka. Even until the closing decades of the nineteenth century, there was no significant improvement in the institutional arrangements for imparting modern and English education through the madrasah education system.[(24)] However, The contemporary comparative backwardness of the Bengali Muslim community in English education, coupled with their declining representation in government services, emerged as a matter of serious concern for both Muslim leaders and the colonial administration.

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